# Department of the Navy

# Joint SPS Performance Support Forum

Crystal Plaza 5, 4th Floor Conference Room B

Crystal City, VA

June 16, 1999, 1:30 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.

This Forum was the first to include Regional Performance Support Champions from around the country. The Regional Champions in attendance included: Jennifer Schultz and Deborah O'Rourke, Capital Area Performance Support Group, Cdr. Ron Kineman and Sue Smith, Norfolk Performance Support Group, Deborah Conti, San Diego Users Group, Jan Gosnell, South Carolina Users Group, and Katherine Gerrish via VTC from the New England Users Group.

## *Organization*

1) **New England Performance Support Group**: Ms. Katherine Gerrish, NAVSEA NUWC Newport, reported the first New England Group meeting was in February with the second planned for July. Ms. Gerrish urged Forum members to have all New England SPS site leads contact her to participate. **ACTION: CMO to provide Ms. Gerrish with a list of names, numbers and email addresses of New England SPS POCs**.

2) **San Diego Users Group**: Ms. Debroah Conti, SPAWAR HQ San Diego, stated the San Diego group meets every four to six weeks. Members send agenda items in advance and depending on the issues brought to the table, the meetings will focus on technical issues or functional issues. Management personnel are not present in these meetings. The information sharing is extremely effective especially now when there is so much SPS activity. USMC participates in the San Diego group along with sites as far away as Twentynine Palms and Washington State. VTC is used during these meetings.

3) **Norfolk Performance Support Group**: Cdr: Ron Kineman, FISC Norfolk, stated that the Norfolk group has held two meetings. These meetings included participants from the Hamptons Road area and PWC Norfolk. He noted that many of the participating sites operate on different versions. The meeting attendees include management and top-level people presently. Cdr. Kineman expressed interest in having more gatherings of regional group members from around the country to share information with a broader user base. Cdr. Kineman stated that PWC Norfolk's information sharing and participation in the Norfolk group helped FISC Norfolk in

organizational file clean up. *Issuing Activities need to be cleansed in the organization files and some deleted (placed in the unapproved) from the preferences. Even if a users has deleted an activity in their preferences, SPS can still Issue with the one originally chosen. AMS has a script to clean these files up).*

4) **South Carolina Users Group**:  Jan Gosnell, SPAWAR Charleston, stated that the first SCUG meeting was last Monday.  Only 4 people attended other than SPAWAR and it included 3 people from BUMED and one from NAVSEA.  The discussions centered on technical issues and servers in particular.  However, only SPAWAR in the Charleston was actively using PD2 at the time.

5) **Jacksonville Performance Support Group**:  Jacksonville began a Performance Support Group.  Ms. Mary Jo Johnson led the first meeting in Jacksonville on June 10th. 25-30 people attended.  Most of their discussion centered on v4.0 issues.  PD2 was displayed on a projector screen and an instructor from DSIA, who was on-site at the time, helped answer questions.  All Forum members agreed that if an instructor happens to be on-site from AMS / DSIA, it can  be good to have them in the regional group meeting, but it should not be pursued if they are not already on location.  Ms. O'Rourke suggested that at the next Capital Area meeting, they could display her v4.1a on screen for Navy users to help Navy users.

6) **Port Hueneme Performance Support Group**:  Mary Guerrant, of NAVFACCO, will champion a newly formed group on the West Coast.  Meetings have not begun for this group.

7) **Capital Area Performance Support Group**:   Jennifer Schultz reported the kick-off meeting for the Capital Group was May 25th.  It included users from NAVFAC, NAVSEA, BUMED, NAVSUP, SSP, MSC and others.  NAVAIR Patuxent River will be included in the Capital Area.  The next meeting is scheduled for July 14th. Members discussed recent deployments, concerns over future deployments, and the AMS Help Desk.  Members agreed that they wanted more information written in a common language to help fix problems and cheat sheets and look forward to seeing this in Knowledge Management / information sharing documents.  CAP members discussed server platforms with sites still considering options.

### *Discussion of UNIX vs. NT Servers*

1.   Ms. Jan Gosnell, SPAWAR Charleston, stated that NT is more stable and it is easier to get NT System Administrators than UNIX Administrators.  However, if a site has strong IT support for UNIX, UNIX can be a very effective platform for PD2.  Mr. John Forbes, AIES, said UNIX is versatile but also complicated and command line oriented.  NT is less user hostile. AMS encourages migration to NT.  UNIX is difficult to manage from a security standpoint.

1) Ms. Diane Lucas, Deputy to CMO, stated that while in San Diego, Supship San Diego reported that UNIX information was difficult to obtain from AMS, and AMS says

that they do not support the operating system. Mr. Murray, NAVSUP stated that NAVSUP Mechanicsburg operates in a UNIX environment and recently wanted to purchase the "N" Series UNIX Server due to the cost / performance ratio.  The "N" Series requires Sybase 11.9, however, SPS still  requires a lower version of Sybase. Mr. Murray stated that AMS has the responsibility for supporting all versions of software that SPS resides upon.

### *Discussion of Database Administrators (DBAs)*

1) Ms. Deborah Conti, SPAWAR HQ San Diego, stated that her site has a DBA from the IT department at SPAWAR.  He spends 25% of his time helping with PD2 activities.  He is a pure DBA and has no knowledge of SPS.  He has been a big help in making SPS on UNIX platform a success at SPAWAR.  A write-up of his roles and responsibilities can be provided to PSF members.  It provides an overview of his duties.  The DBA documents each duty he performs and each test he runs.

2) A general discussion of lessons learned pursued, regarding the critical importance of dedicated technical support as necessary to making PD2 successful.   The DBA can not be an 1102 who sidelines as a DBA.  Oracle and Sybase certification is important in this function.  There is a distinction between a database administrator's expertise and responsibilities and that of a systems administrator.  It was discussed that Sybase training is needed for one systems administrator as well.   Ms. Diane Lucas, deputy to the CMO, agreed with this assessment, and added that, however a System Administrator can be an 1102 with PD2 knowledge.

### *In-House Training*

1) Ms. Deborah Conti, SPAWAR HQ San Diego, stated that migrating contracts is not taught in class, nor documented in any AMS materials.  Ms. Jan Gosnell, SPAWAR Charleston, created a document that explains how you check contracts before you upgrade to v4.1a.  SPAWAR will conduct an in-house class on how to migrate contracts.  This v4.1a migration plan document will be distributed during the next CIMB.  **ACTION:  Ms. Gosnell to distribute the migration document to the CIMB List Server**.

2) Mr. Eugene Toni stated that FISC San Diego trained Simplified Acquisition Procedures users in how to do specific work functions in PD2.  It was very good training and very helpful vs. general PD2 knowledge.  Ms. Jennifer Schultz, FISC Norfolk det Washington, found the same to be true at her site, including SPS details as part of in-house training is essential for buyers.

3) Cdmr Kineman, FISC Norfolk, stated that buyers went from manual contracting, to using a computer, and now there is more for them to keep up with such as EDA and new clauses.  Knowledge gaps are forming, buyers are starting to understand PD2, but understanding new clauses and CCR, etc. starts to get difficult.  Cdmr Kineman

suggested that sites consider passing the non-direct buying activities to others, so the buyers can focus on buying.

4) Ms. Mary Jo Johnson, CMO, stated that another method of training and improving one's knowledge is through the regional groups to disperse information to the super users/system administrators in their region.  .  Attending and documenting regional user group meetings is an important way to gather valuable information, which becomes in effect, in-region training?   Additionally information from the prime Performance Support Forum is available and intended to be dispersed to super users /systems administrators, and any interested parties.  All documents from past forums have been sent via email, and are posted on the Web.  A Performance Support Library is planned with an index, by topic and date, so users can search for information more readily.   Mr. Chuck Mills stated that the web site would also be redesigned so all the v4.1a information can be more easily found.  .

5) Mr. Frank Murray, NAVSUP, went to FISC Jacksonville to meet with the on-site team.  Mr. Murray documented his visit and will pass information on to the Forum.  Mr. Murray asked users if they used the AMS Knowledge Base.  Many of the users did not know what it was.  Mr. Murray raised the point, that publishing information on the web will not help the users that do not have the time and are production focused. Mr. Murray stated that the User Manuals for PD2 arrived on June 3$^{rd}$ instead of in February when Jacksonville was installed, adding to the lack of information at the site.  FISC Jacksonville still has the APADE Desk Guide that they used for contracting.  FISC San Diego is in the process of developing a v4.0 Desk Guide; however, it is 90% complete at the moment.  San Diego will share it with the other FISC sites when they are complete.

6) Cdmr Kineman, FISC Norfolk, stated that they are changing the workflow for the year-end workload.  A less productive PD2 buyer will make the PR form and then pass it on to a buyer that is more proficient in PD2.  He has found that PD2 takes a while to learn, but after the three month learning curve, he anticipates his buyers will flatline at 50% of APADE productivity.  Cdmr. Kineman stated that SPS, the product itself, needs to improve to make up the difference between the anticipated productivity and previous productivity under APADE.  Mr. Toni stated that FISC would see improved productivity with the v4.1 product over the v4.0 product.

7) Mr. Chuck Mills, CMO, stated that this summer, all sites with SPS need to measure productivity.   Ms. Diane Lucas, Deputy to CMO, stated that the CIMB needs to request productivity enhancers to herself and Bob Parillo so they can recommend these to the Requirements Board.  Cdmr. Kineman stated that making the milstrip searchable would definitely fall into the category of productivity enhancers.

8) Ms. Mary Jo Johnson stated that a Computer Based Training (CBT) disk is available.  It is being reviewed at NSWC Dahlgren.  Ms. Gosnell reviewed the CBT as well and believes it is a great tool to refresh users prior to Upgrade training.  Ms. Johnson proposed a demonstration style class, where a superuser would display the CBT on

screen in a conference room setting, and go over the functions of SPS with the full user base.  Price of the CBT is $125.  **Action:  Results of the pilot and a recommendation will as to its use come from the training coordinator after the review is complete.**

## *Upgrade Process*

1) Generic upgrade information will be available to all sites.  It is being sent on the CIMB List Server and will be posted on the Navy Web page.  Ms. Jan Gosnell, SPAWAR Charleston, went to two Upgrades other than her own.  She attended a BUMED and a NAVFAC upgrade, and will go to future sites to assist with upgrading.  Although each site has unique issues, no Upgrade thus far has had the server down for more than two days.

2) Ms. Gosnell has noted a few things that should be changed on the AMS documents such as EDA. Ms. Jan Gosnell reported that the AMS documentation does not say that you need a static IP address. AMS does not document EDA install information. This has been noted on the Issue Tracker.

3) Ms. Gosnell recommended that the site System Administrator stays with the AMS installer at all time during an Upgrade or a new Install.  It is well worth the extra effort to know what AMS is doing.  Ms. Debbie O'Rourke, NAVFAC, agreed.  At her site, they found that AMS had not adjusted the Cognos.ini file after the install.  In addition, she found that on a new install, a script from AMS is needed to load in the security model.  It is also needed for any further changes to the security model.  This script is not required for Upgrades.  Ms. O'Rourke also noted that the installers told her not to use the Sybase password for Sys Admin tasks; however, to add a user to the security model, she has to use the Sybase password.

4) Mr. Frank Murray, NAVSUP, stated that it is important to get the configuration documents back from AMS. Mr. Murray asked FISC Jacksonville to maintain a black book with all the specs to be kept on-site.  Ms. O'Rourke, NAVFAC, stated that the configuration packets from AMS are not arriving on a timely basis to her sites that are already installed with v4.1a.

5) Cdmr. Kineman, FISC Norfolk, stated that when v4.0 was installed at his facility, the Cognos Impromptu files were put into the wrong folders in the install.  Ms. O'Rourke, stated that the same problem happened in the v4.1a install she had a few weeks ago.

## *Electronic Document Access (EDA)*

1) Ms. Diane Lucas stated that ECRC could provide on-site or telephone support for NECO.  Attachments are not feasible if you are using EDA or a hybrid NECO process if NECO is doing the conversion to PDF.  However, if you are hyper-linking

to NECO and doing your own conversion than attachments are useable. This is more a problem with large contracts vs. SAP.

2) Ms. O'Rourke asked if you could transport to EDA if a solicitation turns into an award, since the only change is the cover change. Ms. Lucas stated that since the solicitations and awards are separate documents, the user must reprocess the award separately in PD2.

3) Ms. Gosnell stated that there is no information on how to create a separate EDA / ASF server. In addition, the error messages do not provide any troubleshooting help. A ticket is in to the AMS Help Desk on this issue.

4) For those people that do not want to use the Postscript file coming out of PD2, a shareware product, Postscript Writer is available. It will not handle batch files, but it will convert files to Postscript. The Adobe Distiller is available to convert any Postscript file to a PDF and put it into a separate folder for EDA.

5) Ms. Lucas stated that you could do EDA on your client or on a separate client. For v4.0, the SPS-i server could be used, but this is a separate generation of the document.

6) Cdmr. Kineman asked Ms. O'Rourke if NAVFAC generates BPAs with SPS. Both NAVFAC and NAVSUP supplement the information generated by PD2. **ACTION: Cdmr. Kineman to send a workaround SMART Attachment to Ms. O Rourke**.

### Upgrading from v4.0 or v4.1 to v4.1a

1) Ms. Diane Lucas stated that the interfaces for the FISC sites would be delivered for testing for v4.1a, b, and c the first week of August. This will be a database change for the v4.0 sites and new data will need to be established.

2) Cdmr. Kineman stated that he had duplicate PRs in the v4.0 interface at FISC Norfolk. They have decided to turn off the UDAPS interface because the little bit of data that SPS-i puts in is easier to enter by hand. FISC San Diego and Hawaii have already turned it off.

### Regional User Groups

1) Cdmr. Kineman suggested a 2-day conference every quarter for all regional support groups to come and with no set agenda, discuss multiple SPS topics in breakout sessions. The Forum discussed four main tracks for discussion: (1) planning session, (2) DBAs, (3) Sys Admin, and (4) functional buyers.

### ANSRS

1) FISC Norfolk is testing with ANSRS and if it works it would be a good production tool to allow the clients to generate documents that come to the buyers with all the

ordering information filled out for PD2.  It is not shipboard approved yet, but the desire is to use it for ship to shore.  The lines of accounting are discrete fields.  One of the nice features with this software, is that the user inputs all the information on one screen vs. PD2 where you have to move across multiple screens to enter the same information.  However, ANSRS is a requirement system and not a procurement system. ANSRS is reliable because the information is received electronically via email.

## *Other Information*

1)  Eric Ferraro, PricewaterhouseCoopers, will send a copy of all test scripts used in the Deployment Assessment to CIMB members.

2)  An AMAS meeting will occur on June 24th 10:00am-2:00pm Pacific Time